

son) carried away from Louvain, in defiance of the privileges of the university, and transported into Spain; the courts of justice and the magistrates deprived of their jurisdiction; an extraordinary tribunal erected to examine the delinquencies committed during the troubles; confiscation proclaimed as a principle, not merely against the condemned but against suspects, against those whose only crime was to seek in foreign lands a refuge from tyranny; the right of life and death exercised by the Duke of Alva—for the Council of Troubles only tried the accused, whilst the duke retained the power of pronouncing sentence, an abominable monstrosity of which we seek in vain for a second example in our history—an authority without bounds in the hands of a man who knew no law but his own will; everywhere distrust, intimidation, stupor, &c., the natural consequence of the system of government just inaugurated, the stagnation of commerce, the blight of industry, the misery of the labouring classes,—such was the spectacle which the Netherlands offered at the beginning of 1568."

Alva ere long discovered that the Netherlanders were not disposed to submit tamely to the brutal *regime* thus inaugurated. The old spirit of freedom was relighted by the friction with tyranny. Alva had not reckoned with the dourness of the Protestant character, the rigidity of the Protestant conscience, the dare-devil spirit of Protestant zeal in this northern clime. In Holland and Zealand especially, every fresh outrage was one more nail driven into the coffin of Spanish domination, one more germ that was to blossom into the fruit of revolution and liberty. In the long struggle between force and freedom there was a commingling of motives which worked out the grand result, but, as I have already said, the most potent was undoubtedly the -religious one. Religious conviction it was that nerved men to risk everything in defence of their faith. Without the martyrs, the stern heroism that threw defiance in the face of the Spanish tyrant would have lacked its strongest inspiration. The wave of religious exaltation, roused by the Reformation, was the initial condition of the Dutch revolution. Religious liberty was the mightiest ally of political liberty, and, happily, the Netherlanders had in addition the tradition of a long past of manful